



Press release

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Chemical Materials Agency

Public Outreach and Information Office

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ABCDF Rinsewater Spill Contained

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Early yesterday, workers in the neutralization bay of the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ABCDF) were performing regularly scheduled flushing of the rinsewater vent condenser when a rinsewater spill occurred. The neutralization bay, where the agent processing equipment is located, is a large chamber inside the neutralization building designed to safely contain the release of agent liquid or vapor from the outside atmosphere.

As required for all entries into the neutralization bay, the individuals performing the vent condenser flush were wearing fully protective clothing with self-contained breathing apparatus. The rinsewater splashed on the workers' protective suits. The suits required extensive decontamination before the workers could exit the bay into the neutralization building.

Because no agent escaped the neutralization bay, there was no requirement to evacuate the facility. As a routine precautionary measure, the workers were screened by the on-site medical staff and confirmed as having no agent symptoms or exposure.

Follow-on crews worked to further decontaminate and clean the neutralization bay, and successfully restored the vent condenser. This contained spill will not hinder the continued draining of agent containers at the facility.

Since mustard agent disposal operations began April 23, 2003, workers at the ABCDF, located in the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, have successfully neutralized and destroyed more than 78 tons of agent.

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